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Up-Rising Out of Poverty

The Role of Self-Determination, Political Attitudes and Legitimacy in the Mapuche Movement

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Abstract

Chile is often portrayed as the paradigmatic case of a smooth transition from dictatorship to democracy, sustained by high rates of economic growth. This picture conceals a more complex reality of social conflict provoked by political reform that favors capitalistic advancement at the expense of resource exploitation and the continual and irreversible reduction and destruction of Mapuche land. As the clash between the indigenous group and the Chilean state intensify, this research explores how perceived levels of self-determination held by varying Mapuche leaders shape their political attitudes and legitimize their actions with or against the State. Conceptual frameworks and perspectives related to worldview, postcolonialism, neoliberal multiculturalism and self-determination construct the lens of the analysis. Ultimately, I contend that perceptions of self-determination and empowerment play a powerful role in shaping the relationship between Mapuche communities and the Chilean state and may serve as means of rising up and out of economic poverty.

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Introduction

1.1 Overview

Chile stands proud as the Latin American model for the developing world and touts its fledging 'progress.' This South American nation's path has consistently and openly demonstrated a preference for fiscal growth through resource exploitation and privatization. This 'progression' often comes at the expense of indigenous Mapuche communities (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009).

The Mapuche are the largest indigenous group in Chile and possess strong, spiritual connections to the surrounding nature. They often discover that their collective interests and rights are squelched in favor of the Chilean state's neoliberal policy and economic growth as defined by the interests of transnational corporations (Haughney 2012). This capitalistic 'progress' has resulted in continual and irreversible reduction and destruction of their land as the national state seeks to please domineering market sectors and continued private expansion (Azócar *et. al.* 2005, p.58).

Mapuche factions have responded by "demanding the right to define development priorities" and have launched intensifying efforts to block projects that would dismantle their social and cultural practices. These projects displace communities from "ancestral lands used for subsistence and rituals, and degrade or eliminate native plant species used in traditional ceremonies" (Haughney 2012, p. 202). The Chilean state often responds to these efforts both swiftly and aggressively, giving rise to an escalation in violence from both sides that continue to culminate in fatal tragedies (Waldman 2012).

The prolongation of the conflict between Mapuche communities and the Chilean national state, which has persisted for more than three decades, can be regarded as a reminder of Chile's enduring, broad dismissal of the fundamental right to self-determination by indigenous populations (Richards 2010).

My research stems from this backdrop and seeks to explore perceptions of Mapuche leaders' personal experiences with the Chilean state's multicultural and

economic policymaking, which I ground in worldview perspectives and notions of self-determination. I then consider how these notions shape the leaders' political attitudes and, in turn, why they serve to legitimize leaders' select courses of action with the state to ultimately retain their heritage.

1.2 Research Purpose

The main purpose of my research is to analyze how Mapuche leaders' perceptions of self-determination become a part of the construction of political attitudes and legitimization of diverse relationships and courses of action with the Chilean state. This entails an evaluation of the varying experiences of Mapuche leaders with the State's neoliberal economic policies to illuminate shared commonalities across their lifetimes. And, it explores concepts related to the fundamental human right to self-determination, as inscribed by the United Nations.

My analytical framework is built from a discussion on the guiding concepts of worldview and self-determination, and underpinned by perspectives of postcolonialism and neoliberal multiculturalism. Within these concepts and perspectives, the experiences and attitudes of Mapuche leaders are interpreted in terms of pacification versus disharmony, self-determination versus subordination and preservation versus cessation or adaptation.

Primary data is drawn from interviews with leaders, which is then triangulated against secondary data from local organizations and documentation, academic research and direct observations. A final analysis presents concluding interpretations and observations, and suggests further points of research.

1.3 Research Question

There are two main research questions I seek to answer in this study:
- How are perceived levels of self-determination from Mapuche leaders a part of the construction of their political attitudes?

- Why do these political attitudes currently serve to legitimize the diverse relationships and courses of action with the Chilean central state (here after referred to as the State)?

As such, my study seeks to understand four basic relationships:

(1) The role that perceived levels of self-determination plays in shaping varying Mapuche leaders' political attitudes;

(2) The role that political attitudes of Mapuche leaders plays in legitimizing their select courses of action in an effort to retain their cultural heritage;

(3) The relationship between development perspectives and political participation of varying Mapuche leaders as counter-posed against the Chilean state's consistent, neoliberal economic development course; and

(4) The ways in which Mapuche leaders understand the disintegration of the Mapuche tradition as a result of the capitalistic economic policy.

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

Since the participants in this study are persons possessing constantly changing ideas, worldviews, value systems and behavior patterns, "no absolute truth will be discovered." Rather, I intend to produce a deeper interpretation of experiences with and ideologies of self-determination from the perspectives of diverse Mapuche leaders and how they interplay with political attitudes and activities.

Thereby my research aims to constructively add to the wider discourse related to self-determination and political participation of indigenous peoples. I present a specific exploratory and explanatory case study that emphasizes the critical dimensions of political attitudes, community-based understandings and constructed relationships between traditional Mapuche leaders and the State. I also establish a blueprint of methodology for future studies and continued comparative analysis.

By seeking a greater understanding into such concepts, my research also aims to contribute an ideographic body of knowledge to the wider discourse on

development. As Amartya Sen declared, ultimately people should "lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value" (1999, p.18). In exploring the ideas, value systems and behavior patterns of Mapuche leaders as it relates to self-determination and political positioning, I hope to illuminate varying aspects related to what they consider to be valuable lives. My hope is to spur enlightened discourse that contributes to the development and realization of valued lives in a Mapuche context.

1.5 Delimitations

The term Mapuche does not refer to a singular nation, as they are not a monolithic group. Mapuche communities can be found throughout Chile and parts of Argentina. With more than 500 Mapuche communities in central Chile alone, fragmentation both between and amongst groups is rampant (Azócar et. al. 2005). It is outside the scope of my research intention to produce a holistic representation or a comprehensive examination of all Mapuche leaders. Nor is it my ambition to provide an all-encompassing detailed analysis of Chile's political and institutional architecture. Instead I offer an in-depth analysis of Mapuche leaders' perspectives from select locations while providing an overview of indigenous policy-making and neoliberal economic reform as it relates to the specified political relationships.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Chile: An Introduction

Known as the spine of Latin America's Southern Cone, Chile is often spotlighted as the region's development miracle, having successfully liberalized and consolidated its political and economic structures in the 1990s (Azócar et. al. 2005, p.58).

The nation's slender borders stretch less than one million square kilometers and cradle a total population of 16.9 million people (CIA World Factbook 2011). Of this, approximately one million inhabitants classify themselves as native (Azócar

et. al. 2005), with the largest indigenous group in Chile, the Mapuche, representing about 93% of that population (CIA World Factbook 2011).

Chile's rich natural resource-based economy has persistently expanded since 2003 between 5-7% per year (*ibid*). This market boom has been overwhelmingly based on the production and export of raw materials and natural resources, including copper, timber, fish, fruit, precious metals and hydropower (*ibid*).

2.2 Political Evolution of Chile

Chile sustained almost four decades of civilian rule, competitive elections and increasingly democratic institutions before the 1973 onset of General Pinochet's military coup. It was elitist in nature and "built on a centralized state and verticalist style of politics" which eventually deepened class polarization, radicalized ideology and plunged the nation into economic failure, intensifying public protests, guerrilla opposition and violence (Carruthers 2010, p.344, 345).

Pinochet's subsequent military regime swept the Chilean terrain – politically, economically and socially – with forceful, radical restructuring driven by capitalistic economic policy and neoliberal ideology (Waldman 2012). The military unleashed a decade of brutal repression to extinguish both opposition and Chile's civic culture, while recasting land, class, and labor policies in a neoliberal fashion. Pinochet was finally ousted in 1990 after a social movement from below clashed with verticalist positions above in the face of an economic collapse in the early 1980s. The military dictatorship retreated as stable, civilian rule emerged (*ibid*).

Chile's reinstated and reliable democratic rule has theoretically opened the political room for discourse. However, a tighter lens reveals a prevailing and closed elitist leadership that by contrast suffocates the intersection of public participation and indigenous inclusion (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009). Recent research argues that in the interest of efficiency and avoiding conflict, the Chilean government "tends to broker policy in closed, negotiated processes, in a

top down, 'pact making' style of governance popularly known as *cupulismo*"
(Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009, p.743).

Carruthers and Rodriguez also observed that when indigenous demands
"clashed with industrial and development interests, state agencies and policies
perpetuated the Pinochet-era pattern of siding with private companies, against
the expressed interests of indigenous communities, environmental experts and
civil society more broadly" (p.747).

In accord, earlier observations by Taylor (1998) concluded that:

> "politics in Chile is extremely elitist both in structure and in
> practice. A handful of leading lights from each party (controls) the
> political proceedings…setting the agenda and paying only tactical
> heed to the opposition and even less to the human rights and other
> social movements" (81).

2.3 Up in Arms: The Mapuche and the Chilean State

Many indigenous groups live in tension-filled relationships with governments
that attempt to rule their ancestral land. The Mapuche, translated as 'people of
the earth,' are a collection of four culturally distinct regional families, as
documented by Grebe Vicuna (1998)[1], with a common sense of community.
Historical sources do not indicate a precise time of origin of the Mapuche in
Chile. The first traces are attributed to the Paleolithic Era with the most accepted
theory dating to 1500BC in the Central Valley with the identity being handed
down through time (Danneman 1992).

The Mapuche have a long, embattled relationship with administrative rule as
rights to their territory have bounced back and forth between successive
governments and conflicting legislation. In the late 1500s, and after decades of
struggle, the Mapuche signed a treaty that designated 10 million hectares south

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[1] Vicuna (1998) defines these groups as the Pehuenches, or people of the pines, located in the lower-eastern Andes and the Alto Bio Bio; the Williches, people of the south; the Lafkenches, people of the sea, located along the Pacific coast; and the Pikunches, people of the north.
[2] Four main aspects of Chile's Indigenous Law (No. 19.253) include: formal recognition of indigenous identities, cultures and tradition; protection of indigenous lands and establishment of a subsidy system

of the BíoBío River as their own. By the late 1800s, Mapuche land was reduced to 800,000 hectares after 90% of their land had been handed to European settlers by the army of the new Republic of Chile (Azócar et. al. 2005). The State systematically confined Mapuche to *reducciones*, reservations, during the course of 30 years (Haughney 2012).

Attempts were made to redress the wrongs in the mid 1900s during the era of agrarian reform but were overturned with Pinochet's dictatorship and subsequent rule in favor of forestry companies (Newbold 2004, p.176-177). In 1978, Pinochet decreed the subdivision of remaining communities into individual plots free to be sold in 20 years (Haughney 2012). Mapuche mobilization attempted to overturn the act, but ultimately nearly all communities were subdivided (*ibid*).

After Pinochet's defeat, the four successive Concertación administrations (1990-2010) claimed that reform agendas would include protection of indigenous lands and respect for indigenous culture. At the same time, Mapuche demands for collective rights to territory or political autonomy were routinely rejected (Azócar et al., 2005).

The newly elected president Patricio Aylwin Azócar promised "resolution of land disputes and constitutional recognition" and in 1993, Chile passed its Indigenous Law[2] that established the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI) to protect indigenous rights and concerns and grant natives political positions to empower their voice (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009, p.745). The Azócar government also endorsed the New Imperial Act, which established the Special Commission of Indigenous Peoples, an agency to support economic initiatives, social and cultural rights of indigenous persons (Boccara and Seguel 1999).

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[2] Four main aspects of Chile's Indigenous Law (No. 19.253) include: formal recognition of indigenous identities, cultures and tradition; protection of indigenous lands and establishment of a subsidy system to enable Mapuche to purchase land; a fund for indigenous development "to enable Mapuche to fully participate in the modernization process;" and the creation of CONADI (Newbold 2004, p.178).

In 1999, President Eduardo Frei Ruiz created the Advisory Commission on Indigenous Development Issues, as a means of accommodating demands of Mapuche nationwide and established 24 June as National Day of Indigenous Groups (*ibid*). The next year, President Ricardo Lagos Escobar created the Historical Truth and New Deal for Indians (Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato para los Indígenas) and signed a loan agreement for USD 133 million with the Inter-American Development Bank (Interamericano Banco de Desarrollo) to integrate development programs in Mapuche communities. This administration also defined the New Deal Policy, a series of legislative acts to operationalize between 2004 and 2010 with the focus on indigenous rights, identity development and adjustments to cultural diversity (Aylwin 2007). In 2008, Chile ratified the ILO Convention 169, which encapsulates indigenous rights to identity, participation, land and self-government.

However, most of the Concertación measures failed to include the actual demands of the Mapuche organizations or provide meaningful space for influencing policy decisions . They uniformly evolved into lip service and puppet shows as the political elite systematically took coercive measures to ensure fiscally advantageous projects gained approval (Haughney 2012, Waldman 2012). Haughney states that this "framework created nominal participation that allowed political elites and corporate interests to set policy priorities" (2012, p. 203). Muñoz (2003) finds that the space for the Mapuche to express their discontent has been absent and their ability to participate in government decision-making extinguished. This gave rise to a wave of mounting protests as Mapuche groups fought for the right to define development priorities and influence policy (Fernández 2012).

While the Indigenous Law was enacted as a means of integrating the indigenous people into the quickly modernizing Chile, the government simultaneously unrolled counter-productive laws, such as the Electricity Law that allowed the "expropriation of private property, including indigenous land, to provide energy for the public good" (Newbold 2004, p.180). This was also true of the

Environmental Law, which allowed for exploitation of natural resources for national security and development (Carruthers 2010).

These laws allow for the industrialization of lands for the common good and opened the door for private corporations to expand both their 'development' projects and revenues. Such projects included a chain of hydroelectric installations and timber plantations – all of which involved major ecological and social downfalls for the Mapuche such as the flooding of valuable forestland, industrialization of their native lands and forced relocation of hundreds of families (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009, p.747). This also involved the removal of communities from ancestral lands used for culturally important rituals and the simultaneous diminishment or elimination of native plant species used in traditional ceremonies (Haughney 2012).

As the Mapuche fought to cling to their ancestral land, the government criminalized actions for collective rights to territory. Business leaders claimed that indigenous groups were responsible for 599 violent incidents from 1999 to 2000 (Newbold 2004). The government responded to corporate pressures by invoking the National Security and Anti-Terrorist Law and consequently accused and arrested scores of Mapuche protestors as terrorists and threats to national security. Under these laws, violators are brought before military courts where penalties are stiffer than common law rulings (*ibid*).

In the past decade, the conflict between the Chilean government and the Mapuche has escalated while natives insist the state usurped lands and revoked obligations to return them. The increase in their frustration is evident in the rise of violence in protests, from peaceful protests to hijacking, plantation burning and other acts of arson, equipment sabotage and forceful occupation of land (Newbold 2004, p.178).

In addition to harsher sentencing against the more aggressive Mapuche groups, the State has released increasingly militant responses during protests,

which thus far have culminated in documented police brutality and the killing of two Mapuche on separate occasions (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009). Human Rights Watch (2004) has denounced the Chilean state for criminalizing Mapuche protests.

In summation, we see that the Concertación has exhibited a level of recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity so long as "that diversity did not challenge the traditional notions of nation, the unitary state, and corporate interests" (Haughney 2012, p.203). This combination of awareness to cultural diversity and tenacity for neoliberal economic policies has been defined as "neoliberal multiculturalism," a concept I explore further in my analytical framework (Haughney 2008; Hale 2002; Richards 2010).

3. Analytical Framework

There has yet to be an established theoretical framework for investigating the space of self-determination in a development context. The interpretations, operations and violations of the right to self-determination, especially as it relates to groups of peoples, continue to be debated in international legal arenas, specifically within United Nations agencies (Crawford 2001, Holder 2004, Barelli 2011). Therefore, this section stitches together several conceptual frameworks and on-going discussions with utility in the analysis of the role self-determination can play in shaping political attitudes and legitimizing Mapuche leaders' select relationships with state institutions.

3.1 Worldview

The concept of worldview is employed to illuminate the uniqueness of the Mapuche understanding of the world, and subsequently, how this informs their attitude, perspectives and choices of action within the State's current hegemonic discourse and practices.

According to Koltko-Rivera (2004), no 'formal' theory of worldview exists; however, it can be seen as a category of analysis. Ham (2006) describes worldview as a conceptual lens from which one views their surrounding

environment and gives meaning to their experience in life. Olsen, Lodwick and Dunlap (1992) declare that the "dominant worldview in the culture of a society normally pertains to the totality of human existence and most aspects of social life...generally held by most members of society" (p.13). Subaltern worldviews refer to those held by members or groups of a society that do not comprise the majority (*ibid*). Koltko-Rivera (2004) expands on these interpretations postulating that worldviews include internalized methods of describing the universe, life and its meanings as well as how objects, experiences and relationships are considered good or bad, desirable or undesirable from moral and ethical positions.

The collection of these ideologies within a society can differ according to the value systems of different social groups. Regardless of their nature, they are often used to explain, justify and legitimize an individual or a social group's actions (Olsen, Lodwick and Dunlap 1992).

Worldviews are not static and are subject to adaptation and/or transformation as the surrounding social, economic, political and natural environments change (ibid). Some argue that social transformation toward a more "Western" culture causes the elimination of certain aspects of worldviews (Marglin and Marglin 1993). Serious issues arise when it relates to which aspects of worldviews disappear when they cannot be continued alongside other economic or social changes. Sen (1999) argues that if a traditional view and way of life must be absolved to escape poverty, then it is the people directly affected that must participate in deciding freely what and how to change their worldview points.

In contextually placing worldview in my study, it is important to understand the political context that influences their current construction. Thus, we move on to explore some key concepts related to political ideology.

3.2 Colonialism and Neoliberal Multiculturalism

Understanding colonialism and postcolonial theory is critical in furthering our understanding of the Mapuche people, since their collective position at local,

national and global levels stems from their displacement by the political dominance of the State. This process is commonly referred to as colonialism. We will also consider contemporary theory known as 'neoliberal multiculturalism;' which scholars contend represents a new form of governance and how this may (or may not) be explanatory in the relationship between the Mapuche and the State.

3.2.1 Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory

To add context to the discussion of postcolonial theory, I will first review the concept of colonialism. Indigenous peoples often claim they have occupied their lands since time "immemorial" and are "conquered" by people racially and culturally different from themselves (Maybury-Lewis 2006: p.20). Maaka and Andersen (2006) expand this concept and find that the transition from being "socially and politically autonomous societies to socially and politically subordinate and marginal societies" captures the indigenous experience (p.13).

Scholars commonly explain colonialism as three distinct yet interconnected phases. The first phase generally refers to the historical period of initial contact and the establishment of colonies. In the Mapuche case, this is exemplified mainly through the Spanish *Conquistadores* followed by notions of European settlers. It is common knowledge that the expansion of empires routinely involved severe mistreatment of indigenous peoples and the Mapuche were no exception. The second phase encapsulates the process of nation-building undertaken by the colonizing powers and settler societies. Here we accept the emergence of Chile as a nation-state, driven on the back of Spanish imperialism. Again, this was a process that typically included forcible or non-disclosed measures against indigenous populations (Maybury-Lewis 2006).

The third phase encompasses the persisting acts of colonialism and neo-colonialism in the contemporary postcolonial world. This phase plays a critical role in the "forces that work to either assimilate indigenous peoples into the dominant culture or keep them in a state of marginalization" (Maaka and Andersen 2006: p.13).

On the other hand, postcolonial theory refers to the intellectual discourse that comprises reactions to and analysis of colonialism. It is often summarized as a critique of the ways in which western knowledge systems have come to dominate and seeks to offer alternative accounts of the world. Its critical purpose is to account for and combat the residual effects of colonialism and the paradigms of the emergent postcolonial identity due to the interactions between the colonizer and the colonized (Childs and Williams 1997, Sharp 2008).

Dialogue between postcolonialism and development is thin and tends to focus on the significance of language and representation, and the power of development policies and subsequent material effects on the people subjected to them (McEwan 2008).

Maybury-Lewis (2006) finds that in modern times indigenous peoples are accused of obstructing development and that in itself provides adequate justification for dispossessing them and their ways of living. If indigenous peoples refuse to forgo their separate identities and dissolve into mainstream society, they are said to weaken the state and disrupt modernization. Maybury-Lewis postulates that states typically assume the thought-position that they cannot modernize effectively if they fully accept indigenous cultures. He claims that states thus increasingly feel that they cannot exploit the resources (for the betterment of the common good) that lie within indigenous territories if access to them is obstructed by indigenous peoples (2006 p.26).

3.2.2 Neoliberal Multiculturalism

The theory of neoliberal multiculturalism is crafted from the democratic transitions of many Latin American nations once driven by dictator regimes (Hale 2002). The theory is characterized by the juxtaposition of the adoption of generally restrictive, low-intensity forms of democracy through neoliberal economic models coupled with the willingness of the state to respond to indigenous rights and promote participation in development policies (Park and Richards 2007).

Hale (2005) defines neoliberal multiculturalism as the "limited recognition of cultural rights, the strengthening of civil society and endorsement of the *principle* of intercultural equality" (p.10). He argues that this approach deepens "state capacity to shape and neutralize political opposition" (ibid). In addition, Gustafson (2002) urges that political reforms should not be viewed as empowerment but as another step in the long iteration of the negotiated relationship between the state and indigenous peoples.

Van Cott (1994, 2000) postulates that ethnic conflict is regarded as a threat by most Latin American states as it broadcasts a level of frailty to international audiences. Thus they superficially weave in multicultural policies to demonstrate their legitimacy while minimizing potential uprisings. Gustafson (2002) argues that the inclusion of indigenous concerns on the policy agenda is a scheme to sequester elite interests from prominent methods of political participation. Likewise, Hale (2002) considers pro-indigenous policies to exhibit a strategic maneuver by states to quell pressure for more extreme change.

In presenting a general overview of colonialism, postcolonialism and neoliberal multiculturalism, I highlight the historical and modern tension that exists between Mapuche communities and the Chilean state. Examining the perspectives of Mapuche leaders within these political frameworks is critical to advancing knowledge of the inherent complexities and consequences.

3.3 Self-Determination

Understanding the right to self-determination is necessary toward understanding the role it currently plays in the Mapuche context. We begin with the context from which it emerged.

The right of *peoples* to self-determination was declared a fundamental human right by the United Nations (UN) at its inception in 1945 and, later, considered a prerequisite to the full enjoyment of human rights (UN, General Assembly 1952). In 1960, the General Assembly Resolution 1514 adopted the historic *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples* and states:

"The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation; all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (UN GA 1960, Articles 1-2).

Yet, this innate right to self-determination did not transfer so readily to indigenous peoples; rather it has a long, complicated history (Daes 2008). In a broad historical stroke, indigenous peoples pursued distinction to this fundamental right for decades. Indigenous representatives proclaimed that history was one of their prime strengths in that they became numerical 'minorities' due to either colonialism or state-backed expansion (*ibid*). Armed with their own unique history, traditions, values, belief systems and culture as well as their continued marginalization, oppression and suffering, indigenous representatives fought for distinct UN recognition of their right to self-determination. This eventually culminated in the 2007 *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* that reads:

"Indigenous peoples have the rights to self-determination, in accordance with international law. By virtue of this right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development in conditions of freedom and dignity" (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007, Article 3).

The important aspects gained from this discourse relate to the idea that although self-determination was originally established as a fundamental human right for all peoples and across colonial nations, indigenous leaders had to struggle on the international stage for this same right to be recognized amongst their peoples within their respective states.

Daes points out that it is unrealistic to be afraid of indigenous peoples' exercise of their right to self-determination. She states that it is "more realistic to fear that the denial of indigenous peoples' right to self-determination will leave the most marginalized and excluded of all the worlds' peoples without a legal, peaceful weapon to press for genuine democracy" in the nations they reside (2008 p.24).

Chile's support of the Declaration and thus the recognition of the right to self-determination, and its implementation in practice, suggests a new definition of State-Mapuche relations and a reassessment of power distribution (Seelau and Seelau 2010). Many measures of the Chilean government in the past have been criticized for being filled with empty promises, excluding Mapuche peoples from the decision process and being too paternalistic. Scholars considered this approving vote as a statement of recognition of self-determination by the State and impartation of concrete responsibilities for the Mapuche themselves (*ibid*).

3.4 Connecting the Framework to the Analysis

Reflecting on the concepts and perspectives in this section, it is imperative to draw out critical elements that frame my research and data analysis.

Worldviews, although in a state of constant adaptation, serve as the basis for a group of people's collective survival and the platform from which they attribute purpose and justification in life. Exploring the worldviews held by Mapuche leaders will illuminate aspects related to where they find value in life, how they define themselves and their cultural heritage; it also will help inform influences to their current political attitudes and highlight contrasts related to the capitalistic mainstream view of the State.

Perspectives related to postcolonialism and neoliberal multiculturalism help to understand the historical context and modern day tension that exists between Mapuche societies and Chilean state institutions. Aspects stemming from this interpretative framework can be used to explain the current political situation in Chile and inform conditions related to self-determination and the shaping of political attitudes.

Self-determination relates to the modern day responsibilities of the State and that of indigenous peoples. Its concepts can be used to explore how implementation may be used to transform marginalized, poor populations into thriving communities. This is of course proposes that self-determination and economic advancement are desired by those involved.

The resulting conceptual framework serves to guide my analysis.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

During my research of certain ideologies held by Mapuche leaders, I sought to grasp the variances in self-determination in an indigenous context and *how* these leaders subsequently construct their political attitudes and *why* these attitudes legitimatize their relationships and activities with the State. As such, a qualitative research design was most appropriate, defined by Creswell (2008) as the intention to understand or explore specific social situations and/or interactions. Bryman (2008) adds that it is the interpretation of the social world "from the perspective of the people being studied" and is "closely related to the goal of seeking to probe beneath surface appearances" in order to gain understandings of how people attribute meaning to their life (p.385).

My research strategy enabled my analysis of *how* Mapuche leaders interpret experiences in their world through the lens of their worldview. In line with qualitative tradition, I was most interested in gaining rich descriptions of how Mapuche leaders give meaning to their world, their actions and behaviors through their embedded values, thoughts, prejudices and ideas (Creswell 2008: p.16-17).

My concluding interpretations were assessed after relationships, interactions, beliefs and prejudices were discussed and analyzed through the lens of my framework. Interpretations of the Mapuche individuals' opinions, beliefs and thoughts provided a deeper understanding of how they view and experience their current reality in Chile as well as how they position themselves in favor of

or against certain State-backed policies. Assessments from the government's behaviors and attitudes toward the Mapuche, and vice-versa, revealed important information related to conflicts and the struggle harnessed within opposing worldviews.

4.2 Research Strategy

4.2.1 Ontological and Epistemological Viewpoints

During my research, I was directed by the ontological position of constructivism due to my belief that meaning is constructed through social interactions and experiences *(ibid)*. In understanding that participating Mapuche leaders have constructed their own realities grounded in traditional worldviews, I acknowledge that they deem their life's purpose to establish and maintain equilibrium in the world around them. This worldview implies that the terse relationship with the State has created a sustained disruption to the harmony they seek. As such, I was interested in understanding and interpreting how their perceptions of self-determination influence their political attitudes (Patton 2002). Additionally, it was my intent to explore why these political attitudes then legitimize their chosen relationships and activities with the State, especially when conflict arises between perceived duties to protect Mother Nature (*ibid*).

My research was further informed by my epistemological position of interpretivism as I was aiming to capture the subjective meaning of self-determination and its role in constructing political attitudes and relationships through access to Mapuche leaders' own interpretations (Bryman 2008).

4.2.2 Research Design

As my research seeks to gain insight into contemporary understandings related to levels of self-determination experienced by various Mapuche leaders and how it effects the construction of political attitudes and legitimizes activities, a multiple case study design with an exploratory thread was applied. Yin (2003) asserts that a case design is most appropriate when research is grounded in the 'how' and 'why' explanations. He states that the "more your questions seek to explain some present circumstance, the more the case study method will be
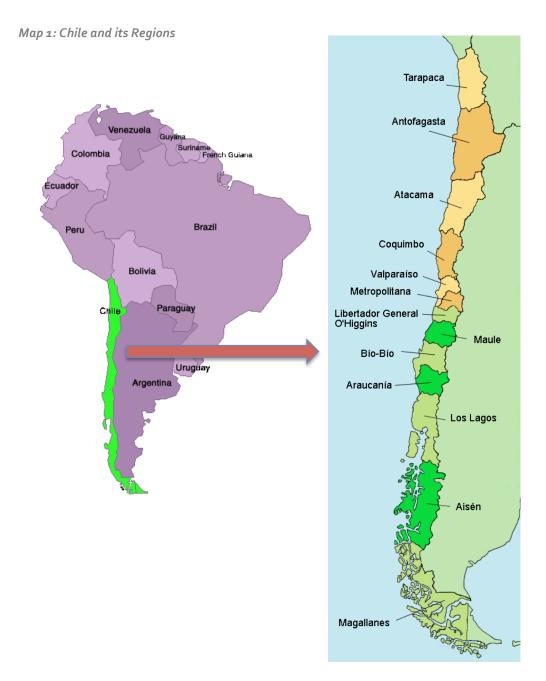
relevant” (2003, p.4).

The case study approach helped develop a linear, but iterative framework. It also helped establish the grounds to identify propositions, such as the mainstream view of Chile is capitalistic, development is desired, self-determination is experienced, and views/experiences differ amongst leaders. See Table 1 below for an outline of the case study specifics. For an overview of the research plan, see Appendix 1.

Table 1: Outline of Case Study Specifics

	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Quaternary
Main Subject of Analysis	Discourse and actions related to self-determination; political attitudes and selected interactions			
Topics of Analysis	Mapuche leaders and their views of development, self-determination; Political attitudes; Activities between Mapuche leaders and government agencies; Chilean Mapuche movement;	Experience	Attitudes	Actions
Propositions	a) Main stream view is capitalistic b) ‘Development’ is desired c) Self-determination is desired d) Antidevelopment			
Boundaries	Geography	Degree of conflict	Role in community	Economic activities
Theory	a) Worldview b) Colonization, Neoliberal Multiculturalism c) Self-determination			

4.3 Methods of Sample Selection

I selected the Bío Bío and neighboring Araucanía regions of central Chile for my study given their current positions as Mapuche strongholds and epicenter of

intensifying, violent activity related to the struggle between Mapuche groups and the State (Waldman 2012). See Map 1 below of geographical reference. The sampling strategy was structured but remained in flux during the research process.

Map 1: Chile and its Regions

Prior to arriving in the field, I had contacted about eight other professors and researchers who had recently conducted in-field studies with Mapuche persons

in these regions. The majority overwhelmingly informed me that access would be extremely difficult.

As I struggled to gain access and key informants' networks failed, I began mapping and contacting relevant organizations, institutions, research centers and activist groups within predefined geographical areas as well as journalists and public defenders who might assist in bridging contacts. As a means of relationship building, I also spent a three days with a Mapuche community that engages in tourism activities to generate income.

Creswell lists a number of sampling procedures, emphasizing that a 'good plan' is a flexible one that involves several different strategies and the ability to adapt to changing situations (2007, p.126). Within the confines of limited access, I knew I needed to be opportunistic and the snowball effect would play a role but I also wanted to be specific in my criteria of variation and the relation between them. I aimed to interview Mapuche leaders from varying levels of conflict as well as economic activities.

The resulting sample involved leaders from three communities, including: Lago Budi, Ralco and Padre Las Casas. See Map 2 below for geographical placement of the research sites.

Map 2: Research Sites

Key: green: Lago Budi; yellow: Ralco; red: Padre Las Casas

Source: Author's illustration

The choice of exact locales was informed by local experts and key informants and represented a maximum variation in levels of conflict and economic activity – from peaceful to aggressive struggle, and self-sufficient to aid dependent. See Table 2 below for an overview of the communities; information presented stems from leaders' interviews, national census and my direct observations. For a more detailed synopsis of the communities, see Appendix 2.

Table 2: Overview of Selected Communities

	Lago Budi	Ralco	Padre Las Casas
Population	13,275	9,383	58,795
Mapuche identity	Lakfenche	Pehuenche	Pehuenche
Main economic activity	Tourism	Hydropower	Agriculture, Forestry
Political status	Self-determinant	Mixed	Dependent
Political pulse	Peaceful	Post-conflict	Aggressive opposition

All interviewees had established, recognizable roles as leaders within their respective communities. Identification as a "leader" was determined through traditional, tribal roles as honored by the community members involved.

4.4 Data Collection

Field data was collected from October to December 2012 and constructed through face-to-face interviews. Kvale (2007) postulates that an interview is the 'construction site of knowledge' and 'a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings' of a participants daily world (p.2, p.16). Bryman (2008) points out, the epistemology that underpins the qualitative research approach rests in the beliefs that "face-to-face interaction is the fullest condition of participating in the mind of another human being" and that "participating in the mind of another human being is needed in order to acquire social knowledge" (p.385).

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted on a mainly one-to-one basis with each of the Mapuche leaders. On one unplanned occasion, three leaders attended the same scheduled interview; questions were answered individually but within the impromptu small group. While this may have

detracted from the intimacy of individual interviews, it did create an informal group interview during which the leaders expressed their unity in viewpoints and action. It served as a unique opportunity to witness and engage with a group of leaders aligned under a common vision and a shared chart of action.

I approached the interviews through Chambers' (2008) overarching principle, namely, that participants were the teachers and researchers the pupils. Open-ended questions were posed to allow for personal expansion. As Mikkelsen points out, this technique allows for "unexpected, relevant issues" to be reacted upon by the researcher (2005, p.89). I reacted to responses as necessary to probe key ideas. This allowed for a casual, conversational tone of interview.

All interviews were conducted in Spanish and took place at the leaders' personal residences, which often translated into sitting around a communal fire in a traditional *ruka*. Although I maintain a proficient level of Spanish, I did use a translator during the interviews to ensure a respectful tone was used. The translator was a student from the Bío Bío region and spoke the shared 'country' Chilean dialect as opposed to the 'untrusted' Santiago Chilean. This seemed to imply an innate sympathy toward the Mapuche and may have contributed to the very trusting, open dialogues that occurred.

I introduced myself as a research student from a Swedish university and developed rapport with casual conversation prior to the interview to answer any questions and to allow a connection of trust to begin. Prior to the interview, participants were advised of the purpose of the research, its use and their ability to withdraw at any time. The length of interviews averaged between sixty to ninety minutes.

Each community or tribe presented different opportunities for interviews, given the population, access, safety and time restraints. Access was difficult to attain and granted via different routes per location. For example, personal relationships developed in Lago Budi as I first visited the community as a tourist.

A local expert with established connections was able to open access in Ralco and made the first introductions. A key informant helped identify and communicate with leaders in Padre Las Casas. Eventually, due to the personal rapport I established, access to the highest levels of leadership in the Mapuche arena, leaders who typically refuse 'a Western audience,' such as a *lonco* (tribal chief) and *machi* (female priestess), materialized and added an additional layer of rich insight. See Table 3 below for an overview of the data constructed.

Table 3: Overview of Data Collected

Location	Total Interviews	Composition of Participants	Response Themes
Lago Budi	3	Tribal leader, the most formal education, the most 'active' female defined by community	Return to communal living; peace; maintain close harmony with nature and religion
Padre Las Casas	7	Tribal chief (lonco), medicinal women (machi), tribal advisor, rebel leader, agriculture coop leaders, women's handicraft coop leader	Return of land; education; cultural identity; return to natural health and eating; opportunity; fight to the death
Ralco	5	Mapuche mayor, alderman, leader during opposition, leader post-opposition, tribal chief	Salvage land; take back what is possible; maintain harmony to serve Mapuche
Total	15		

A review of secondary sources presented additional information. Mikkelsen (2005) argues "it is a crime in research and development work to not allocate time for prior documentary studies" (p.87). Historical accounts and timelines from the Mapuche perspective were gained through a literature review and study of territorial maps across time. I also built additional information from relevant academic studies and reports, local media sources, government agencies, and organizations involved with the Mapuche.

In addition, my own participant observations helped inform my analysis. I had the opportunity to observe first-hand several different ways of Mapuche daily life having stayed in each of the participant communities for short periods of time on several occasions during the period of data collection.

4.5 Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded, with the exception of one whose spiritual beliefs and status precluded her from any permanent replication of her image, including voice. Detailed notes were made immediately following interviews and field observations. Initial data analysis occurred alongside data collection to allow for the questions to be refined and to open new lines of inquiry. All recorded interviews were transcribed and translated into English by a native Spanish speaker.

I reviewed my data multiple times and continued to group and code according to similarities and differences. This "framework approach" enabled me to draw out key themes and create conceptual categories of responses (Pope et al. 2000, pg. 114) such as viewpoints, economic activities, feelings of self-determination, political attitudes and activities. These categories were further assessed along geographical positions, grouping responses from the same communities, as well as through the lens of my analytical framework.

Each interview was considered against the other interviews; similarly commonalities and differences from each community were assessed against the other communities. My summary analysis indicates how and why particular positions were demonstrated (or not demonstrated) as well as identifies commonalities across the discourse. Exemplifying quotes are included.

The data analysis was both deductive and inductive. I looked to determine which themes emerged from the field data regarding perceptions of self-determination and political attitudes yet these broad categories were already informed through previous desk research.

To help guide my analysis, I applied Yin's four principles: all empirical evidence was attended to and considered; major rival interpretations were considered; most significant aspects of the research remained in focus; and personal expert knowledge was applied (2003). These provisions allowed me to maintain a tight concentration on my research and helped protect the quality of my analysis.

4.6 Reflections

While great lengths were made to protect the quality of data and the rigor of analysis, it is essential to exercise reflection as a means probing deeper into the integrity of the study and myself as a researcher.

4.6.1 Positionality

Several theorists claim that our roles, positions and identities are sophistically tangled and inherent in the process and outcomes of research (Ladson-Billings 2000; Stanley 2007). Stanfield (1995) postulates that the very systems that mold research projects may innately portray certain groups of people, especially those of color, in deficient terms. Milner (2007) states that any differences "from the White majority…are often perceived as insufficient and substandard" (p.389).

I carefully considered the dynamics between my position as a female researcher from a Swedish university and that of the research participants. We do not share a single common thread in culture, ethnicity, nations, language, economic, educational or religious backgrounds. The Mapuche leaders viewed me as a Western, "light-skinned," young woman conducting research for a post-graduate or "high-level" degree. My awareness of the potential play of power paradigms was acute and it was imperative to understand and consider this during the course of my research.

I also examined my own landscape of cultural identity and heritage to gain a deeper understanding of how my background shapes my own worldview. Although I am American by birth, I was raised in six different nations spending the majority of my youth outside the United States. I have now immigrated to Europe, where I have lived in Sweden for the past eight years. Do I even claim a direct cultural identity to any one nation? What makes me American? How has Europe/Sweden influenced my views? This led to exploring how my life experiences influenced my research, my emphases, and my approach. How did the Mapuche realities align, or not align, with my own and how would I know?

4.6.2 Language

Language can carry a significant impact on the understanding and interpretation of data. Spanish was the common language we shared, but not the mother-tongue of the participants or myself. (The Mapuche native language is Mapudungun.) In addition, assuring the validity of the data transcripts presented inherent challenges on multiple fronts including the loss of meaning through translation from Spanish to English, as well as during the transfer from oral language to the written word, each with its own set of unique rules and styles that does not always transfer from one to the next (Kvale 2003). Local informants supported the study by donating time to translate both in-field interviews as need and with the subsequent transcription.

4.6.3 Primary Sources

Mapuche communities have a reported reputation for being 'closed' societies, which I experienced. This presented immense difficulties in reaching local informants and securing participants. It also advanced subsequent challenges related to both time and access, as time to develop meaningful, trusting relationships was limited and access to relevant other communities was thus constricted. The leaders who participated had some type of connection to myself or a key informant, meaning I was unable to access leaders who did not have a pre-existing connection.

Although the three communities in my study represent a fair dispersal of perceptions and experiences, it is important to note that this study does not intend to draw overarching conclusions related to the Mapuche society as a whole. From a constructivist point of view, the knowledge built from my research is both time and context specific, negating the goal of generalization. However, it is useful to discuss a conceptual framework, and illustrate self-determination with empirical data.

4.6.4 Conceptual Analysis

I acknowledge that by utilizing a conceptual framework, the analytical process becomes highly dependent upon interpretation rather than numerical tallies or percentages. It was thus critical that I develop strong, fair interpretations of my data using my conceptual framework

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Primary research involves a set of ethical considerations to ensure that no harm occurs to participants. As such, I considered the following individual rights: to be informed, to choose, to privacy, to safety and to respect. Informed consent was gained prior to each interview. Interviewees gained a detailed understanding of what their participation entailed as well as my main objectives, methods and use of the study.

Given the current political climate and social sensitivities, strict confidentiality was installed. Interviewees had the option to decide whether or not their full names would appear in the research as means of evading any potential harm. Any requests for privacy that may include a refusal to respond to certain questions or preferences not to be voice-recorded or photographed was noted and respected. The involvement of the participants was completely voluntary and they were informed of the possibility to withdraw their participation at any time.

Stringent efforts were made to avoid causing any physical or emotional harm to the participants, including sensitivity to word choice in the crafting of interview questions. Great care was taken to ensure that data used in my research accurately represents what was said or observed, keeping the appropriate context and avoiding misrepresentation.

5. Analysis

My analysis first concentrates on the underpinnings of the Mapuche worldview and how these views are entrenched in the shaping of perspectives and feelings

of the Mapuche leaders as posed against the Chilean state. Next, I consider the perceptions of the participants' personal experiences with the Chilean state's multicultural and economic policymaking, which I ground in notions of self-determination. Last, I focus on how these notions shape the leaders' political attitudes and, in turn, why they serve to legitimize leaders' select courses of action with the state to ultimately retain their heritage. Collectively, these analyses serve to answer my research questions.

5.1 The Mapuche Worldview and Political Agenda

According to Mapuche historian and cultural anthropologist Armando Lefío (2003), Mapuche persons create meaning and are shaped by their powerful kinship with the environment. Mapuche persons come to understand their existence as a reciprocal relationship with nature: "We belong to the earth and the earth belongs to us" (Lefío 2003, p.1). In the case of the Mapuche worldview, they owe their existence to the gift of the earth, which grounds their reason for being. Mapuche believe there exists a collective and "permanent aim of achieving environmental equilibrium and harmony" that is best realized living in communal unity and expressed at the individual level of attaining harmony and balance within their own lives (*ibid*). In other words, it is their life purpose to collectively maintain a continuously harmonious relationship with all beings and forces nourished by Mother Earth to preserve human existence into future generations.

The Mapuche have created a set of ecological beliefs that interpret and explain the diverse phenomena experienced in daily life. This belief system furthers their aim of regulating their behavior in harmony with nature (Lefío 2003). Mapuche people regard land as a dimension where "a myriad of creatures and spirits coexist and interact, to include animals, trees, rivers, persons, spirits and both positive and negative forces" (*ibid*). This view fosters the belief that Mapuche persons must abide by practices of "respect, protection and harmony with every other being that shares the environment and is nourished by Mother Earth" (*ibid*). The term "being" extends to the co-existence of both natural and supernatural dimensions.

The powerful kinship with nature that grounds the Mapuche worldview permeates almost every aspect of the Mapuche leaders' lives, regardless of their geographic location, economic status or political stance with the state. The historical weight of these beliefs is enormous in that they believe a line of "ancestors built a utopia, a culture, a land, a language, a conception of the world and approach to science without influence from other cultures or peoples" (*ibid*).

Interviews with Mapuche leaders revealed a consistent belief that the central tenet of life's purpose was to establish and maintain this sense of equilibrium and cooperation. They, as leaders, believe they carry the gravity of this responsibility. Leaders' responses communicated a deep respect for the thousands of years and titanic accumulation of knowledge and insights across time required for the Mapuche ancestry to conceive and advance their views as well as define their codes of conduct in tight relationship with their world, i.e. the land, ancestors, spirits, energies and powers.

One leader said, "Our overarching aim of achieving worldly environmental balance and harmony is the same as our goal of attaining harmony and balance in our own lives, our own communities. And, this has to be my top priority." Another leader stated, "The feelings of physical, emotional, social, cultural, religious, mental well-being are a result of keeping our world in harmony and equilibrium." A third added that feelings of harmony take root at personal levels and stem from a strong connection to one's culture, "which means understanding what it means to be Mapuche, to be of the land, and to live according to our heritage. This is fundamental." And yet another commented, "Our traditional lifestyle, a communal lifestyle, was so peaceful. No one starved; we lived with and worked with each other, the land. This is how life as a Mapuche is to be." "We are of the land. This land, this water is a part of us. Here live our roots, our history. We cannot be without it. We must be in balance."

As Mapuche are literally and figuratively 'people of the land,' all participants agreed that their actions as leaders must support the very fundamental need to protect their communities' interrelatedness to nature and earth through rights to

territory. "If we don't do this successfully, we die as a people." For many of them, this translated into the rightful ownership of their land. "We have the knowledge from thousands of years to nurture our land. The government, these big companies, they are destroying it (the land). We have to fight to care for it." "Right now we are losing, we are disappearing. It is impossible to survive according to our culture. We have almost no land."

Many leaders expressed feeling levels of "outrageous humiliation," shame and anger when they recollect their experiences in "losing land." Most were either children or in their formidable teenage years. Their experiences exhibited similarities such as scare tactics of police and military, forced signatures of documents (land ownership) that were not understood, forced migration alongside harsh subdivisions and the introduction of private property lines. "Our creators did not make private property, we are not meant to live split and as individuals; we as humans are to share and live in harmony with the whole world." Another stated, "We were uprooted from our conception of the world and with that came the largest theft of our lands and communal lifestyle."

The accounts of the leaders support the process and understanding of colonization I discussed previously in the analytical framework. Mainly, that the Mapuche were once autonomous societies that were forced into social and political subordinate societies. Given the 'dominant' society's engagement with monetary mechanisms, or capitalism, the emergence of poverty as a condition was connected to colonization by the Mapuche leaders. "Almost immediately, we became extremely poor and hungry. Money was a new idea and we had none." Another added, "We couldn't survive on the fraction of land allotted to us. It turned into every family fighting on their own to survive…before we took care of each other, our crops, our animals together." Other leaders recollected how the division of land brought intense internal fighting within communities between siblings, cousins, neighbors. "We were estranged and left divided by the Act. Now, even brothers fight each other." Another leader shared her view on lack of access, "We couldn't get jobs – we didn't have the right kind of education. We didn't have cars, let alone roads, to find jobs. We were all so desperate."

Another leader succinctly contrasted the opposing two views, which was echoed throughout other interviews.

> "I see that the development of the Western worldview is related solely to the economic issue, an economic power and political power. This is the direction of Chile. That is quite different from the worldview of the Mapuche people. The development of the Mapuche people is more related to our environment, our spirituality, our culture, our language. I would say that the material is not relevant to the Mapuche, as the Mapuche culture has always been part of the environment."

What I ascertain here is that the very purpose and way of life, as defined according to the Mapuche worldview, is harnessed within their land and the physical space they occupy. This worldview is perceived as being dramatically suffocated by the State, an entity believed to hold a contrasting worldview that is willing to exploit the cherished environment of the Mapuche for economic progress. The Mapuche communities were thus monetized and forced into capitalism, a different economic culture. As their territory shrank and individuals no longer had access to "enough" land, they suddenly need to pay rent for land, which requires cash and thus entry into the capital market.

The leaders interviewed connected their sudden condition of poverty to the loss of their land, as well as to their suffering and their disappearance, not redefinition, as a people. And while the leaders may romanticize the past, these perspectives magnify an irrefutable importance of land to the Mapuche and highlight concepts related to access of land as means of autonomy and self-organization. In addition, these viewpoints substantiate the deeply personal responsibility Mapuche leaders in this study feel toward restoring a sense of perceived equilibrium and harmony as means of protecting their indigenous heritage. Through my interviews, it seems the seeds of these responsibilities were sown decades ago, often under violent episodes, as the leaders experienced abrupt, forced imposition of a foreign lifestyle onto their traditional way of life.

We now explore the experiences the participants have had with the State as leaders in this "new" world, attempting to elevate their communities from the sudden rungs of poverty, as imposed by the capital-driven State, and negotiate for political inclusion.

5.2 Mismatch: Mapuche Leaders and the State

It is important to assess the leaders' personal experiences with the State's dovetail of multicultural and economic policymaking practices to understand the practicality of neoliberal multiculturalism and its inherent complexities and consequences for the Mapuche leaders as they experienced it. Discussions relating to experiences with the State were uniformly kept to the community level, as this is where all leaders interviewed felt the greatest impact.

Lago Budi

In Lago Budi, a beautiful, idyllic community rich with rolling hills, free-roaming livestock and a sacred lake, Mapuche leaders indicated an intense struggle for survival post land takeover, occurring throughout the 1980s and 1990s. "We were one of the most vulnerable communities in the economic sphere and lived in large isolation." Poverty was rampant, lack of information was crippling and the 125 km to the nearest city, regional capital Temuco, was impossible. While they agree that the hardship is not as extreme as it once was, local Mapuche leaders still battle the grind of economic poverty.

As the government showcased its endorsement of ethnicity and indigenous political inclusion through its installation of various acts and policies at the national level, the Mapuche in Lago Budi did not dare gather in organized protest. "People were afraid to come together to discuss problems. We lived in extreme fear of what the government would do. We had already seen terrible things happen." This leader continued with personal eyewitness accounts of police brutality, complete with beatings, disappearances, helicopter guns and military shootings. Another stated, "Why would we risk speaking out again? We already had to try to prevent the (subdivision) law and to demand base communities. But, we were ignored."

So whilst sensitivity toward ethnicity was broadly indicated at the national policy arena, leaders did not feel it provided practical realities of voice and inclusion at local levels. The personal accounts and experiences with on-the-ground State officials demonstrated otherwise. These perceptions support the very notions of neoliberal multiculturalism I have previously discussed in that national multicultural policies where announced to demonstrate the State's legitimacy but actions by local officials sought to minimize potential uprisings and quell protest.

"The government had no vision of how to think or generate meaningful programs that would provide facilities to the Mapuche communities," said one leader. Leaders in Lago Budi believed they learned to use their isolation as a strength and began to identify opportunities that would improve their quality of life, mainly via sustainable economic alternatives, tourism. Their disconnection from mainstream society, they felt, allowed them to incubate tourism activities into a sustainable income-generating practice for more than two-dozen families in the remote area. The cash generation was needed to support basic livelihoods (mainly food and clothing), community improvements (basic plumbing, electricity) and to purchase some land back. One leader recollected his strenuous efforts in applying for funds, "I had to seek professional advice because there were serious deficiencies in the terms being used to communicate; many of the terminologies did not reach the level of the common language managed by Mapuche people."

Initially funded by international non-government organizations through a grant proposal process, the community's standards of living slowly improved and the state began to pay attention. "It became a whole process," said one leader. "I was forced to specialize in tourism management and cultural heritage for my people and had to find a way to study abroad. I did. Without the help of the government."

Leaders here feel they took decisions together with their people and then made themselves into the bridge that helped bring this development model to

community families, who could then take ownership and continue to develop it. "We are still a poor community but we have done well. I feel that now we have the ability to talk with a listening government. We've shown them what we can do and now they listen." This statement also reinforces the idea that Mapuche communities gain the attention of the State as long once they are economically productive and involved in the capitalistic approach to development.

Ralco

Ralco, a forest community in the northeast heart of Mapuche territory and nested in environmental beauty and rushing rivers, was once filled with rich ancestral and spiritual sites. However, a chain of hydroelectric installations changed the Mapuche community's physical face and spiritual power as a seven-year conflict resulted in the 2003 completion of a major, highly controversial hydroelectric power station. Today, Mapuche leaders continue to work with the State to slowly repair the extremely severed relations between the two.

Leaders in Ralco felt legal reforms created the illusion of channels for citizen input but, in actuality, decisions were reserved for top levels amongst the elite. Previous social movements in Ralco support this notion. "We fought for many years against the installation of hydropower on our land. Not because we were against development. We opposed the specific location because it was the site for important ceremonial practices and near an ancestral graveyard."

Mapuche activists leaned on the Indigenous Law to support their case. As one leader recalled, "We thought the indigenous laws were going to help us, give us a ground to stand on. But, they didn't. We had no voice in the room of national development."

A litany of meetings were held between Mapuche leaders and government officials, which the leaders interviewed regarded as a tactical move to demonstrate a 'false' ethnic sensitivity while attempting to silence the

movement. In the end, the hydrodam was constructed according to its original plan to the great loss of local Mapuche communities and the displacement of more than 700 families.

Following the hydrodam conflict, Ralco has seen a rise in Mapuche becoming actors of the state in locally elected positions such as mayor and aldermen. Leadership in Ralco regard this state-controlled canopy of empowerment as a 'negotiated' means of using state funds for initiatives they deem beneficial to the community. As one leader stated, "Here we play the game together. And ultimately we choose what is best for our communities under the guidelines of the state's funding." Another echoed that sentiment, "I use my role with the state to help communities write proposals for funding. We need to use every possible means to get back what the state has taken from us. We have lost so much. I use this role for the Mapuche people in my community."

Padre Las Casas

Padres Las Casas, a county with more than 400 different Mapuche tribes, is considered the poorest in Chile with regards to economic earnings. Local Mapuche leaders revealed a different scenario and a mix of perspectives. While the local government has funding to support the improvement of Mapuche livelihoods through sustainable economic activities, the overall sentiment from leaders is that there are strict limitations to the state's responsiveness, especially if their needs interfere with the local, lucrative foresting activities.

A common theme throughout interviews with leaders in Padre Las Casas was the continual referral to local government-established programs designed to aid Mapuche communities. In other words, programs that seek to drive market expansion and capitalistic activity. Leaders who engaged in the agricultural programs as defined and established by the state experienced varying levels of success in community economic improvement. "They didn't want to hear about the crops we wanted to grow, only those that they said we should grow, and this was best." It appeared that those who did well with non-native crops, such as

strawberries and blueberries, continued to receive funds and support through inputs, access, etc. and were touted by the government as gold stars toward its assistance of Mapuche. Those who did not fare well with productivity remained off the map. This can be seen as an example of imposing the culture of the hegemonic players in the market, as the government promotes productivity of food goods for the West.

On the other hand, leaders from tribal communities in Padre Las Casas that interface with the forestry industry felt the state abandoned their rights to political participation and inclusion. "This land was taken from my grandmother. My grandparents were met with bullets. We have had to fight, to stand up to the authority and therefore we get no support from the government."

In this area of the county, it appears the State consistently demonstrates support for foreign-owned forestry companies within ancestral Mapuche territories. To date, the companies own three times more land than the Mapuche (Alywin 2002). It also seems that Mapuche leaders earn the State's 'listening ear' if they turn their land into economic activity and increase their agricultural productivity.

Regardless of their economic activity in Padre Las Casas, government backed programs that are designed to fund community projects related to productivity, health and education, are regarded by Mapuche leaders as a means to pacify Mapuche groups. Most leaders interviewed criticized the State for the lack of local participation by the indigenous communities in the design of assistance programs as well as exhibiting a true understanding for what needs are considered most critical to communities.

Concluding Remarks: Neoliberal Multiculturalism

In turning back to the analytical framework, we are reminded that colonialism and neoliberal multiculturalism both serve to either extinguish or diminish the voice of indigenous peoples. Actions along these lines carry a subsequent impact on self- determination. This study demonstrates the varied experiences of

leaders with interactions at local government levels where impact is considered greatest by Mapuche leaders.

In Lago Budi, isolation inadvertently helped advance self-determination in a way that leaders found meaningful to their communities. This sense of empowerment grew organically and was only later recognized and then advanced by the government. The government had persisted as it always had, offering no assistance to the community until its leaders paved their own path. Local leaders took it upon themselves to identify and pursue a course of action that would generate economic activity. At the same time, we can consider that through this productive economic activity and advancement, the leaders earned the 'listening ear' of the State.

In Ralco, levels of self-determination were born in the wake of a conflict and are perceived as monitored by the State. Leaders consider themselves as having the ability to make decisions that directly impact their communities under the guidelines of the State. This means they are "granted" a degree of autonomous self-determination within the more broadly defined priorities of the central state's priorities.

In situations in Padre Las Casas where leaders opposed development policy because it infringed on ancestral lands, leaders felt powerless and ignored by the State. They felt that raising their voices resulted in a direct cut-off from the government, who chose not to listen to them. Those leaders who acquiesced to government programs *and* were successful felt they had earned some small levels of self-sufficiency but needed to "follow instructions of the State." The idea of self-determination diminished into the paternalistic condition.

In all cases, leaders agreed that there has been a historic lack of participation and self-determination in local development policy-making and program creation that affects their economic activities, land and heritage. "Development policy is highly centralized in Chile and comes from deep with inside. It does not and has

never included the development demands of the indigenous persons of Chile and has always minimized them and their demands," said one leader.

We see a clear trend for the State to exhibit a 'listening ear' to those communities and those leaders who engage in the market and support expansion of capitalism.

We can now ask ourselves, how do these experiences and perspectives then shape political attitudes?

5.3 Political Attitudes Take Shape

After 17 years of military regime and 20 years of Concertación administrations, the majority of Mapuche leaders interviewed in this study believe, in some fashion, they are owed a historical debt and this debt is to be paid in land. All seek to regain their original territories as a means of salvaging their heritage, a means of improving livelihoods, and as means of re-establishing the equilibrium that is perceived as having been disjointed for decades, even centuries.

The participants all expressed a strong commitment to the struggle for their rights. They each regarded themselves as active leaders but did not represent a homogenous political attitude, even within communities. Important ideas emerged that relate to concepts of self-making versus being-made by power relations with the state.

Lago Budi

Leadership from Lago Budi presented similarities in current political attitudes that emerged from an expressed sense of pride for the accomplishments of the self-driven tourism initiative. Leaders repeated the need for patience, for resilience, for peaceful negotiations. "We have learned that we must work with the government. But, we must be very patient. They walk very slowly."

One leader described himself as initially "very aggressive, violent" on the back of watching his father lose his land, crops and livestock. "I was so angry that I

would do anything to get back at the state. I was young. But I learned that discussions have higher odds of leading to something productive rather than protests which always led to nothing." Another leader mentioned that, "We have to keep the peace. It is the only way we survive as a tourism-based economy. And, they will listen to us. It may not lead to solving our needs but it doesn't cut us off. We negotiate, we discuss and then we wait to see."

Leaders in Lago Budi expressed a uniformly calm attitude toward the State, regardless of their personal emotional histories. Interviews expressed a sense of acceptance, acknowledging that the only way for them to progress is to support approaches with respect and peace. This does not mean that the leaders agree with the state. As one stated, "I think that there has not been a lot of opportunities for Mapuche to develop into their best form because policies are not the most suitable." Taking it upon themselves, leaders in Lago Budi created their own opportunities, driving their own agenda.

If we apply a critical eye, we could argue that as a tourist-supported community, this self-chosen route of economic activity simultaneously prescribed the need for a peaceful attitude toward the state as it cultivates a peaceful community. After all, tourists are not likely to visit areas of conflict. In addition, we observe that leaders of Lago Budi opened themselves to engaging in capitalistic Chile, rather than choosing not to participate in the market and risk being cut-off. They purposefully sought other economic activities and use of their remaining land.

Ralco

Interviews revealed that leaders in Ralco define their state of political attitudes in terms of post-conflict, meaning after the Mapuche defeat and the completion of the Ralco hydrodam. Leaders felt the hydropower plant split leaders, and divided unity among tribal communities. "Some were angry and wanted to take action. Some just gave-up. Others just accepted," commented one leader. "But we've never been the same."

The leaders in Ralco agreed that the wound of the hydrodam is still quite fresh, yet the feeling of empowerment through locally elected positions supports their perceptions of some level of self-determination. "Now that we have a Mapuche mayor and aldermen, we have better control over how state funds at the local level can be used. This is a good feeling," said one leader. Another was of the opinion that they had gained "official recognition" as elected leaders rather than be "ignored" as the traditional leaders, *loncos*, of the tribes. "We are a peaceful people and have always wanted to cooperate, but we needed to be heard. Now we can be in the same room at the same level."

Yet others felt that these elected positions were another "show" put on by the State in an attempt to "right their irreversible wrongs." Leaders of this thought thread did not accept these positions as a means of steadied, if not guided, progress. "We are still on the outside of society. We still have a lot of poverty. We still are not heard because our demands don't even make the table." Yet another contended, "It's a new game of clever – how can we play the state through our officials to get our demands met. And for them, how can they show us 'progress' so that we keep quiet?"

In Ralco, we observe that the State-fostered sense of empowerment through recognized elected Mapuche leadership has cultivated practical attitudes toward the state for those within its realm. For those who chose not to jump in the state-backed ring, it seems to have provoked attitudes of mostly suspicion and anger.

Padre Las Casas

Leaders of Padre Las Casas reveal a spectrum of political attitudes from positions of acceptance, "The government program has been good to me. So, I do as they say," to extremely violent, "We will fight until the death. We must and we will."

Those who embarked upon the agricultural routes composed by the local government, and who have been successful, seem to have developed positive attitudes toward the government. "The government suggested we do this and I

did and it worked. We are thankful even though it wasn't what we asked for." It wasn't clear if there existed concerns related to positively as long as their demands have fit within the loosely defined integration program, such as education programs or intercultural health. Those who expressed attitudes of anger, disdain or distrust of the government did so with conviction.

Concluding Remarks: Political Attitudes

What we begin to see is that despite shared worldviews and similar histories with the State and its usurpation of land, subsequent political attitudes appear to be perpetuated by individual experiences with the local government that run the spectrum from amicable to violent.

We observe positive attitudes toward the State exhibited by leaders who flexed self-determination to a level that they defined as meaningful. We observe complacency in attitudes by leaders who were 'made by the government' combined with an acceptance of working together toward economic progress as defined by the State. Lastly, we note more hostile attitudes emerging from those who perceive a complete lack of self-determination or voice in local development.

If we reverse the lens through the Mapuche leaders' perceptions, it seems that the government is willing to react positively to leaders' whose demands fit within their loosely defined integration programs, such as agricultural productivity. Those whose needs or demands fall outside of the government's defined action map, or outside the lines of market participation, are more likely to remain on the peripheral and appear to provoke attitudes related to combat, fight and aggression.

5.4 Legitimizing Acts

Assessing whether a certain political attitude represents resistance or consent can be considered a meaningless exercise. Hale (2004, p.20) argues, "There is no point in trying to neatly classify this experience as either cooptation or everyday

resistance; both are blunt conceptual tools…focused on the practice themselves rather than on the consequences that follow."

However, I argue that by advancing our understanding of leaders' political attitudes we can begin to understand why these perspectives legitimize their chosen courses of action. We also gain rich insights into leaders' decision-making processes, their perceptions of their roles and activities, and changes in their value systems and worldviews.

Lago Budi presents a peaceful, practical approach to relations with the government. While their self-made development initiative as a community has driven their members from the bottom rungs of vulnerability, it seems the leaders legitimize their current actions, self-classified as subservient at times, for the sole purpose of driving their agenda forward. "We do what it takes. And we find we can get things done through discussion and patience. Lots and lots of patience," said a leader. At this time, the success of Lago Budi's self-driven tourism initiative has resulted in improved electricity, Internet access, plumbing, job creation and ownership/administration of its local grade school. While they have developed their community according to their self-determination, and later backed by funding from the State, it seems the leaders drive their demands forward with, or without, the government. They legitimize their relationship with the State due to their self-determined economic progression, in that they have advanced from extreme poverty, and recognize the need for State funds to continue this "capitalistic development." They consider their tools of patience and discussion to be critical to the relationship.

In Ralco, we witness a transformation from resistant attitudes into attitudes of collaboration and complacency. Leaders who work within the State present their positions as ones of strategic gain - a means to allocate state resources for programs or areas that they define as beneficial. "We have to take all possible means to take back when we can, where we can. This is an opportunity," said one leader. Another explained that his position was a means to service his people, to

work with the government and hopefully to achieve increasing inclusion in development prioritizing.

We can understand the elected Mapuche state actors draw direct lines between maintaining a positive, productive relationship to the state in their 'official' positions and the ability to capture funds in support of their own communities. As the State maintains a decentralized approach to community development programs, this leaves the Mapuche leadership to direct the use of generally allocated funds to further local progress as prioritized by the leaders. The attitude of complacency and collaboration exemplify the acceptance of the rules of the game. Leaders appear to lean on the reasoning of "take backs" rather than progression and evolution of the nationally flaunted relationship.

In Padre Las Casas, we see that those leaders who have selected methods of aggression and violence ground themselves in a certain entitlement and legitimacy to fight. "I think there has been a flattening. Our politics relies on people who do not protest. If you do protest, they don't consider you. I believe people should protest, to shout I am here, I need this, and I will fight to the death for it." Another leader commented, "That is our hope, to keep fighting. We are not going to stand and keep quiet. We have lost fear of the police."

6. Conclusions

After analyzing the commonality of Mapuche leader worldviews against their varying levels of perceived self-determination, diverse political attitudes and assorted legitimized acts, I can begin to construct my overarching interpretations.

While leaders' ideas of "success" ranged from a full return to communal-style living , complete political autonomy and fully reclaimed lands to operating their own television station, equal access to education and job opportunities, there are some evident trends.

The importance of maintaining a close connection to Mother Earth and nature as well as retaining their own language, religious practices and cosmovision belief system was a common theme across Mapuche leaderships in this study. This retention of traditional worldview values and socio-cultural aspects was a fundamental goal and deemed critical in retaining Mapuche heritage.

Every single leader interviewed felt the Mapuche culture, heritage, language and knowledge is disappearing. No one believes it to be transforming. All asserted that since they do not have complete autonomy in they ways they govern themselves and use their land, their culture will vanish completely in the next one to two generations. Lago Budi is the only community that believes it takes proactive and effective measures to thwart this phenomenon by including Mapuche-centric perspectives and lessons within the mainstream curriculum at its school.

From this study, I reinforce the idea that the Mapuche are not a monolithic group united under a singular nation or clear mission with a cohesive movement - one cause and one demand. Severe fragmentation prevents coordinated efforts for a more widespread, potentially more effective, movement. This brings to question the effects of a neoliberal multicultural strategy as a mechanism for not only quelling protest, but actually serving to dispel and dissipate a more powerful movement.

I also find that the Mapuche community leaders are individualistic in nature. Each individual tribal community, ranging from populations of eight up to several hundreds, determines the nature of its own discourse and relationship with the government. Each community leader identifies their own problem areas and maps their own separate courses of action and lists of demands, irrespective of neighboring communities. The success of individual communities becomes largely dependent upon how united the community members are within themselves.

I note that while authorities amplify the role of Mapuche in enhancing diversity in Chilean society but downplay claims for recognition of collective and cultural rights, local level interactions are molded by these national and transnational discourses and events. At the same time, I can argue that the relationships between the Mapuche and local governments are a product of local histories and relationships. National rhetoric seems irrelevant to on-the-ground realities.

The right of peoples to self-determination is commonly regarded as one of the most controversial issues of international and indigenous law. As stated, one of the major questions in the debate relates to what this right actually implies for its legitimate holders, such as does it entail a right to secession? However, States' concerns about territorial integrity present a major obstacle in defining a clear acceptance and operationalization of self-determination.

From this study, a case can begin to be made in a Mapuche context for the critical need of self-determination and its role as a framework toward inclusion. In other words, we begin to see how self-determination can empower Mapuche leaders and how it endorses a set of participatory rights that can be administered, in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect, to promote constructive dialogue, positive political attitudes and productive actions with the State.

Two communities, Lago Budi and Ralco, appeared to be advancing in ways found meaningful by their respective leaders. Both experience some level of self-determination, rather than confrontation. (It should be understood that all three communities in this study are considered impoverished from an economical perspective in Chile.)

The success of Lago Budi's self-driven tourism initiative has resulted in improved electricity, Internet access, plumbing, job creation and ownership/administration of its local grade school. One leader mentioned that they used to be one of the most vulnerable communities in Chile and now they are in discussions to develop their own Mapuche banking system. It is important to note that as Lago Budi has opened their community to the State's capital-driven

trajectory of development, the technological advancements have been absorbed into their identity as Mapuche to varying degrees.

In Ralco, Mapuche members have become high-ranking elected officials that have majority voting power when making decisions and use this as a means to channel funds toward self-determined and prioritized initiatives for the betterment of their community.

These two communities share commonalities in terms of their outlook on the collaborative dealings with the State – the need to maintain peace and pursue constructive, patient dialogue with local governments to secure their participation and inclusion, thereby advance their self-determined needs.

In contrast, Padre Las Casas remains the "poorest" county in Chile yet with the nation's highest number of Mapuche tribal groups represented within its bounds. The State measures their poverty in strictly economic terms while the leaders include their lack to land and culture as equal indicators. The area is home to aggressive, even fatally violent, opposition to the government. Situations tend to be flash sparks but have escalated in frequency and intensity during the past decade. A couple leaders, who have been previously imprisoned for acts of protest, believe their communities must "fight until the death."

It seems the system here runs on a paternalistic condition in which the government hands out directives or money in irregular patterns to initiatives or individuals it deems worthy. There does not appear to be a coordinated effort attached to a longer-term vision that promotes participation, project success and community empowerment. Financial or seed handouts are given on an individual basis. When the handouts are withdrawn, people starve.

Through this study, I gather a strong, vivid sense that communities that experience self-determination as a means of identifying and driving proactive mechanisms for development from extreme poverty adopt more practical, collaborative attitudes toward the government via cooperative actions. In this

context, there exists, however, a balance of tension between self-determination and the practical approach to "partnering" with the government and the true effects of the neoliberal multiculturalism approach as a means of suppressing demands and protest. How much autonomy do Mapuche leaders lose in deciding their future development within this relationship?

To advance the discourse and analysis of my study, a tighter look into linkages between self-determination, ownership and inclusion as an effective means from poverty would add value. In addition, a comparative analysis across indigenous populations would serve to inform the broader discourse as would a gendered approach. It also would be critical to monitor acts of operationalized self-determination at the community level to illuminate the sustainability and effects of this course over a longer period of time.

Many believe that the Mapuche have legitimate claims to rise up against – land, biodiversity, cultural heritage, worldview – and that their collective rights as a people should be equal to but distinct from Chilean people. Perhaps self-determination offers opportunities for a swifter shift to a more balanced world between Mapuche communities and the Chilean State.

Word count: 14,387

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Appendix 1: Summary of Research Plan

Self-determination, Political Attitudes, Activities				
Locations Bío Bío; Araucanía Regions	Lago Budi (tourism, peaceful)	Ralco (hydropower, site of major dam, post-conflict)	Padre Las Casas (agriculture/ forestry, intense clashes)	
Research Design	Qualitative	Linear, iterative	Case study, multiple, exploratory	
Sample (in each community)	Leaders - 3	Leaders - 5	Leaders - 7	Total: 15
Sampling Strategy	Maximum variation	Opportunistic	Politically important	Intensity
Sampling Selection Procedure	Networks	Key informants	Snowball	
Data Gathering	*Primary* - Mapuche leader interviews - Supporting interviews	*Secondary* - Desk research - Literature review	*Tertiary* - First-hand observations - Key informants	
Data Recording	Voice recorder	Photography (as permitted)	Written notes and observations	
Data Analysis	*Open coding* - Grouping - Categorizing	*Axial coding* - Links - Patterns	*Selective coding* - Core categories	
Challenges	Access	Time constraints	Language barrier	

Appendix 2: Brief Description of Communities

Llaguepulli/Lago Budi

Llaguepulli is located on the coastal, southwest border of the Araucanía region and is home to South America's only saltwater lake, the sacred lake of Lago Budi. According to the census in 2002, the zone around the lake is one of the poorest in the region where more than 73% claim Mapuche identity.

The remote nature of the area, combined with the complex political history between the
Mapuche and the state, has resulted in few opportunities for local residents. In 2000, the
Mapuche community surrounding the lake initiated a sustainable development project to build a tourism industry that both shares and preserves the lake and their cultural heritage while providing economic activity. This initiative was initially backed by state funding. Subsequent projects are either self-funded or derive from INGO support.

The beauty and harmony of the area has drawn tourists from all over the world who seek authentic experiences while slipping away from the demands of urban life. Although only a short distance from the intense clashing found in nearby Temuco, preserving the peace is the most fundamental aspect to sustaining the tourism initiative and spreading knowledge of the Mapuche heritage.

As a result of the success of the tourism, the community has been able to take over the local school, becoming the first and only Mapuche administered grade school in the nation. Under Mapuche leadership, the school has grown to include a library and Internet access while improving national test scores.

Population: 13,275
Mapuche Identity: Lafkenche
Main Activity: Tourism
Economic Status: Self-determinant
Current Political Pulse: Peaceful

Ralco

Located in the Upper Bío Bío River Basin, the community of Ralco sits in the northeast heart of Mapuche territory. During the Pinochet era, a chain of hydroelectric installations was planned for the area that involved "major ecological and cultural disruption, industrialization of wild lands and forced relocation of hundreds of 'Mapuche' families" (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009, p.747). After the first project, in neighboring Pangue, resulted in 'ethnocide' discourse and the eventual denunciation of the World Bank president in the 90s, Mapuche leaders were determined to oppose the Ralco project.

The controversy dragged on for more than seven years and by late 2003, the dam was completed, invading Mapuche historic villages and territories and resulted in the relocation of 700 people and the flooding of 70 km of river valley that included a graveyard. It is claimed that the Ralco saga "deepened divisions within the Mapuche movement and severely damaged relationships between the Mapuche, the environmental community and the state" (Carruthers and Rodriguez 2003, p.748).

Today, Ralco is the site of a major transnational hydroelectric power station and dam established by Endesa, a privately owned Spanish giant. The plant uses water from the main local water artery, the Bío Bío River, to produce 690MW of electricity.

Ralco is the only township in Chile governed by a Mapuche Mayor and elected a council comprised of Mapuche aldermen.

Population: 9,383
Mapuche Identity: Pehuenche
Main Activity: Hydropower
Economic Status: Mixed
Current Political Pulse: Post-struggle

Padre Las Casas

Padre Las Casas sits on the outskirts of Temuco, the largest city in the Araucanía region. The area at large is the center of the Mapuche stronghold and continues to see a rise in violence related to Mapuche protests. The Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco, known as CAM, is known to be especially active in the area, and loosely coordinates the majority of major opposition activities. Some situations have turned fatal.

Padre Las Casas is the poorest county in Chile in regards to economic earnings and encases the lowest literacy rates. It claims home to the nation's highest number of individual Mapuche communities within its limits, representing more than 400 tribes.

The county is saturated with police, both in uniform and undercover dress. In 2008, two French filmmakers were arrested and detained without warning after a meeting with Mapuche members from an area known for their 'rebellious' activity. The most recent outburst involved a protest to the forestry trucks that ran over and severely injured a Mapuche child on her way home from school.

Population: 58,795
Mapuche Identity: mixed, mainly Pehuenche
Main Activity: Agriculture and forestry
Economic Status: Aid dependent
Current Political Pulse: Aggressive opposition